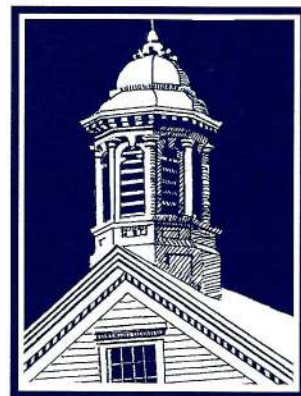


the CASTINE VISITOR

CASTINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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THE BARON IN FACT AND FICTION

Daniel Ennis

Editors' Note: Professor Daniel Ennis is currently Interim Associate Dean for Humanities and former Chair of the Department of English at Coastal Carolina University at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. He and two other scholars are working on a book dealing with the Baron Saint-Castin as a literary figure. By their count there have been at least a dozen poems, stories, and dramatic adaptations of the Baron's life, published in France, England, and the United States. What follows is a brief overview of Dr. Ennis's findings. We hope to learn more from him in the future.

By the time he died in 1707, Baron Saint-Castin was already a legendary figure. The mythmaking began in 1703, when Louis-Armand Baron de Lahontan, himself a well-traveled soldier and adventurer, published his *Nouveaux voyages dans l'Amérique septentrionale* (*New Voyages to North America*). A first-hand travelogue that is no longer viewed as a credible historical account of French Canada, de Lahontan's book makes Saint-Castin out to be part savage and part hero, worshipped as a god by the Abenaki, feared by the English for his military prowess, and fabulously wealthy from his trading activities. De Lahontan's description of Saint-Castin, which occupies only two pages, provided an outline that later writers filled in with adventure and romance. The later stories, poems and plays that formed the Baron's fictional biography were produced with little regard for historical truth, but they reveal a great deal about what the Baron represented to generations of French, English and Americans.

A fictionalized version of Saint-Castin's life, *Azakia: Anecdote Huronne*, was printed in Paris in 1765. That tale's author, Nicolas De La Dixmerie, spent his life in France, but nonetheless thrilled Parisian readers

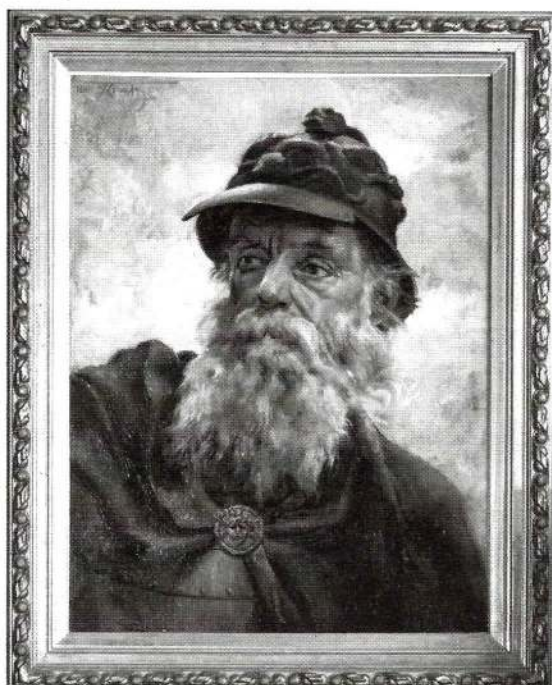
with tales of adventure set in the South Seas and New France. Dixmerie calls his hero "le Baron de Saint-Castins, Officier dans les Troupes du Canada." The tale is not set in Penobscot Bay, however. Dixmerie moves the Baron hundreds of miles inland to a region vaguely located near the Great Lakes. There Saint-Castin encounters and saves the life of a Huron

princess named Azakia. The Baron declares his love for Azakia, but is rebuffed because she is devoted to her courageous Indian husband, Ouabi. The Baron joins the Huron in their war against the Iroquois, changing his name to "Celario." His heroism impresses Ouabi who, somewhat improbably, rewards the Frenchman with the gift of his wife's hand.

Azakia: Anecdote Huronne was translated into English, retitled *Azakia: A Canadian Story*, and printed in London in 1767. It was reprinted in a Boston newspaper in 1789. The tale influenced the American poet Sarah Wentworth Morton, whose long poem based on the story, *Ouabi*, appeared in 1790. The poet follows Dixmerie's example, and her rewriting of Saint-

Castin's life amplifies the Frenchman's heroic qualities. The Baron is called "Europe's fairest boast," a man who is exiled from his homeland but learns nobility from the "savages." In Morton's

continued on page 6



The Baron as portrayed by W. H. Low
in *Century Magazine*, September 1882
Courtesy of Witherle Memorial Library

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Highlights of CHS Summer Calendar

Summer Exhibit

Opening Reception Sunday, June 26th

History and Hearsay – Tales of Castine Houses
includes intriguing tales that circulate about shoes
found in walls, famous visitors and infamous
householders.

Third Annual Deborah Pulliam Lecture

Wednesday, July 20th

Lecture by Pulitzer Prize Winning Historian
Annette Gordon-Reed
Delano Auditorium

Art Sale August 20th – August 21st

Opening Reception Friday, August 19th

More detailed information will be published in next *Visitor*

**Our thanks and recognition are extended to
the following who have recently added to
the Castine Historical Society collections:**

Virginia Bourne

James Day

Lucy Ledien

Gregory Morse

**Annesley Swicker in honor of
Ann Miller's birthday**

CHS actively collects photographs, papers, maps,
memorabilia and artifacts to document life in
Castine and the Bagaduce area. If you want to
donate something you think is worth preserving,
please contact Paige Lilly at (207) 326-4118 or
curator@castinehistoricalsociety.org. Either we will
add your material to our collection or suggest a
more appropriate institution for you to contact.



The mission of the Castine Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is to collect, preserve, protect, and make available a variety of materials that illuminate the historical development of the Castine-Bagaduce River Area from its beginnings to the present.

The Castine Visitor is published three times a year by the Society for its members and friends.

Lynn H. Parsons &
Anne H. Parsons.....Editors

info@castinehistoricalsociety.org
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**Castine
Historical Society**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Many of our members do not have much information on what happens at the Castine Historical Society after we close the exhibits and the buildings in September. You might be interested to know that on going projects such as Lynn Parsons' church history work and the restoration initiative to the Grindle House are in full swing. Paige Lilly, our curator, works four days a week on the preservation of the collection, coordination of scholarly (and sometimes not so scholarly) inquiries, and a myriad of other collection-related tasks.

The CHS Board meets on the second Tuesday of each month with many of the "away" members taking time from their schedules to participate by conference call. During these winter months and after considerable discussion, decisions on budget, future exhibits, community relations and the health and direction of the Castine Historical Society are hammered out.

One of the critical challenges facing the Board is encouraging the growth of our membership. It would be easy in the short term to be complacent about the number and the enthusiasm of the present membership. The future is not as clear, and we are having a healthy discussion on ways to attract new members while meeting the expectations of the current members. That discussion begins with a question. What are the demographics? As you might expect, much of our support comes from summer residents and I have already written in a past *Visitor* about the need to make CHS more visibly relevant to the Castine community.

To this end we are currently in discussions with the Castine Cemetery Committee to find ways and resources to help in the preservation of that important historic site. I am also pleased to report that under the leadership of President Brennan, the Maine Maritime Academy has requested our participation in a major retrospective of the schooner *Bowdoin* in 2012. This follows the very successful joint venture with the Wilson Museum and the Library on the 2009 Lincoln Exhibit. More cooperative opportunities exist with the Adams School for instance, the Town of Castine and the Castine Merchants Association.

But what about the majority of our members who are only here for a few months of the year? Why do they join? Why do they continue to participate? It is pretty clear to me the reason most people contribute to the Castine Historical Society is that they love this town. Many have been coming here for years and some even represent a second generation of summer residents. They realize that it is a very special place whose unique history, carefully nurtured, is as important as its beautiful harbor and homes. Membership in the Castine Historical Society validates that understanding.

The question is: does the next generation share that commitment? Does it need encouragement? I have found that the promise of immortality through membership in CHS and a personalized brick at the front door works wonders. So I ask those of you who can do a little missionary work with those close to you who may take this special place for granted. Grandchildren, frequent visitors, prodigal sons and daughters all should be encouraged to join.

Michael Coughlin

Castine's Vital Records

Lynn Parsons

One of the teaching techniques often used in undergraduate history classes is to compare the task of the historian to that of a detective. Like Sherlock Holmes, the historian puts together seemingly unrelated bits of information to reveal a story that would otherwise be hidden. This is especially true of local history.

In working on the Castine Church History Project, we are spending considerable time studying not only the records of the churches themselves but also the records of the town's selectmen, the federal census returns, and the town's vital records (i.e., the records of Castine's births, deaths, and marriages). None of these sources is completely without errors or mistakes, but after allowances are made, they can reveal an intriguing picture.

1870
SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in the town of Castine, in the County of Hancock, State of Maine, enumerated by me, on the 1st day of August, 1870.

No.	Name	Sex	Color	Profession, Occupation, or Trade	Place of Birth	Married	Single	Widowed	Divorced	Under 18	18 and over	Total
1	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
2	Andrew Fuller	m	W		Maine							
3	George Fuller	m	W		Maine							
4	Martha Fuller	f	W		Maine							
5	John Fuller	m	W		Maine							
6	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
7	Charles Fuller	m	W		Maine							
8	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
9	George Fuller	m	W		Maine							
10	Martha Fuller	f	W		Maine							
11	John Fuller	m	W		Maine							
12	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
13	Charles Fuller	m	W		Maine							
14	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
15	George Fuller	m	W		Maine							
16	Martha Fuller	f	W		Maine							
17	John Fuller	m	W		Maine							
18	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
19	Charles Fuller	m	W		Maine							
20	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
21	George Fuller	m	W		Maine							
22	Martha Fuller	f	W		Maine							
23	John Fuller	m	W		Maine							
24	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
25	Charles Fuller	m	W		Maine							
26	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
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32	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
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36	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
37	Charles Fuller	m	W		Maine							
38	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
39	George Fuller	m	W		Maine							
40	Martha Fuller	f	W		Maine							
41	John Fuller	m	W		Maine							
42	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
43	Charles Fuller	m	W		Maine							
44	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
45	George Fuller	m	W		Maine							
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54	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
55	Charles Fuller	m	W		Maine							
56	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
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58	Martha Fuller	f	W		Maine							
59	John Fuller	m	W		Maine							
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94	Martha Fuller	f	W		Maine							
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96	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
97	Charles Fuller	m	W		Maine							
98	Elizabeth Fuller	f	W		Maine							
99	George Fuller	m	W		Maine							
100	Martha Fuller	f	W		Maine							

Sample page from Castine census return
The Fullers are listed toward the bottom

For example, we learned that between 1780 and 1838, twenty-four Castine women gave birth to ten or more children, for a total of 259. (One woman had twins.) In contrast to other communities, most of the children seem to have survived infancy. We learn, too, that the custom of naming children after famous Americans was alive and well in Castine. We

found at least eight George Washingtons, two Thomas Jeffersons, two Andrew Jacksons, and one each John Adams, James Monroe, and Martin Van Buren. (George Washington Jackson, born in 1841, could possibly claim two presidents.) There was also at least one Benjamin Franklin, one Christopher Columbus, one Marquis de Lafayette, and somewhat inexplicably, one Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, a signer of the Constitution from South Carolina.

By comparing the date of marriage as recorded either by the town's ministers or the town clerk with the date of birth of the first-born in the family, we learn that not a few nineteenth-century brides in Castine were pregnant at the time of the wedding. (Castine was not at all unique in this.)

Sometimes the church records reveal stories of personal misfortune. Take, for example, the case of John and Sally Bowden. In 1857 the Bowdens were charged by the leadership of the Trinitarian church on Main Street with "delinquency as members of the church" for being absent too often from worship and for abuse of intoxicating liquor. John in particular had been seen drunk on the Fourth of July. In a long letter to the congregation, probably written by someone else, the Bowdens acknowledged their guilt, pleading distance and lack of proper clothing as an excuse for non-attendance. They also promised to give up drinking, or at least "intoxicating spirits," and asked the church to pray for them. The prayers, if any, were ineffective, and John was excommunicated seven years later.

Sometimes the sources reveal a saga worthy of Shakespeare. The case of Joshua and Nancy Fuller is an example of this. According to the church records, the Fullers were among the most active in establishing the Trinitarian church in the 1820s, along with Thomas Adams and Deacon Mark Hatch. Nancy Fuller appears twice in Castine's vital records: a note to the effect that she and Joshua had nine children, and a notice of her death on December 26, 1865, aged "72 yrs 10ms." There is no record of her birth, but we don't need one, because if she was "72 yrs 10 ms" on December 26, 1865, then we know she was born sometime in February 1793. The list of her nine children tells us that her first-born, a daughter also named Nancy, was born on December 17, 1809. Putting together these bits of information, we learn that Nancy Fuller was barely sixteen years old when she conceived her first child, and presumably less when she and Joshua Fuller were married.

Which brings us to Joshua himself. He does not appear in the vital records at all except as the father of Nancy's nine children. The federal census

for 1850 describes him as a shipbuilder with real estate holdings of \$4000 (not an inconsiderable sum), and being seventy-one years old. This would make him born sometime in 1778 or 1779, and therefore at least fourteen years older than his wife. Joshua is missing from the federal census of 1860, but it shows Nancy with considerable property that she did not have ten years earlier. From this we may surmise that Joshua Fuller died sometime between 1850 and 1860, leaving his property to his wife and children. A search of the cemetery records at the Wilson Museum tells us that, indeed, Fuller died in 1856. His grave is in the town cemetery.



Grave of Joshua Fuller

Courtesy of the Wilson Museum

But there is more. Although he played a major role in its founding, Joshua does not seem to have ever joined the Trinitarian church. Nancy, however, is listed as one of the original fifteen members. We might assume that her commitment to the orthodox evangelicalism that typified that church in those days would be enough for both of them, providing a nourishing and harmonious atmosphere in which their nine children could grow up.

But that does not seem to be the case. The church records for the 1830s hint that the Fuller marriage was in serious trouble. On August 5, 1837, the Trinitarian church clerk recorded that "reports were in circulation unfavorable to the moral & Christian character of Mrs. Nancy Fuller, a member of this church." The charges against her included "having abandoned her husband's bed & withdrawn from him entirely," and "having maintained an improper intimacy with another married man." She was accused as well of having ridden out "frequently with the same person," and receiving "frequent visits from him & spending the time of such visits alone . . .

often not returning until late in the evening." And, finally, "having been seen on one occasion in an unbecoming position in the Chaise with him." The man was never named.

Three prominent citizens were assigned to investigate: Thomas Adams, who, along with Nancy was one of the original fifteen members of the church, his younger brother Samuel, and Otis Little, whose brother Doty had also played a major role in establishing the church. They reported a week later that they had met with Nancy "& had a full & free conversation with [her] on the subject of the reports in relation to her conduct, and endeavored to convince and reclaim her, but without success." (No women served on the committee, nor on any committee at that time. Females could be members of the church – in fact they were a considerable majority – but could not be members of the church's "society," its governing board).

Nancy Fuller's response to the charges against her was carefully crafted. She admitted "absenting myself from his [Joshua's] bed . . . for which I feel I have justifiable, good, and sufficient reason; but decline at this time laying before the church." She denied any "improper intimacy" with the man in question, but admitted visiting him. She conceded staying out on occasions as late as nine o'clock, but vigorously denied the last accusation. "I have never been, seen or unseen, in an unbecoming position with him." Yet after deliberation, the all-male committee determined that the charges against her were "substantially true."

As one of the founding members of the congregation, Nancy Fuller's case required them to move cautiously before taking any action. Some proposed that she be suspended for three months to allow time for her to repent and rejoin; this was later shortened to two weeks. In the meantime she was urged to "enquire of your own heart, whether the united opinion of nearly every member of the church that your course has not been in accordance with Christ, should not induce you to pause, and . . . restore yourself to the confidence and christian affection of those you have grieved."

Nancy Fuller would have none of it. She acknowledged that she was not perfect, and that her conduct was "far from being in accordance with the precept and examples of Christ." But it was she, not the church, who had been "aggrieved by the censorious and criminating spirit manifested towards me by them, at this time." She would not go into detail. "The relation in which I stand to Mr. Fuller, however much it may be deprecated by the church, or

the world, I conscientiously feel to justify the course I have pursued toward him." Her eloquence grew as she concluded. "I have been basely – cruelly slandered – he who should be my bosom friend is foremost in the ranks of those who persecute me – and the church – whose sympathy and support might have been expected, have prejudged and condemned me . . . handing over to it the character of one of its oldest members for the venomous tongue of slander to gorge on."

Just who the "bosom friend" whose support Nancy Fuller had expected is not clear. It couldn't be her husband, who was not a member of the church. It most likely was Thomas Adams, who had been with her sixteen years earlier when they had founded the church, but was now among her accusers.

At its meeting of September 10, 1837, the male members of the congregation, after declaring the charges to have been "virtually sustained," voted unanimously to excommunicate Nancy Fuller. The clerk noted that "a majority of the female members present expressed their assent by rising (being requested to do so) and none expressed their dissent when requested to do so."

The story of Nancy and Joshua Fuller did not end in 1837. Twenty-three years later, in 1860, after her husband's death, Nancy requested re-admission to the church. "I hereby acknowledge," she wrote, "that I was in justice excommunicated from the church . . . no act of my life has been so grievous to me as that I should have given you occasion to have excluded me. In so doing I have injured myself, wounded my friends, and above all Christ has been wounded in the house of his friends." To those whom she had offended "I humbly ask your forgiveness, and if any one has ought against me, and will come and tell me, I will make restitution, all that is in my power. I present this to you, that I may be restored, and have my standing in the church, as in former years."

At some point Nancy met with Rev. Alfred Ives, the pastor of the congregation, who had not been present in 1837. As Ives later recorded, she agreed that the church was justified in its action sixteen years before, "but had they known all the facts they might have judged otherwise." Upon learning of Nancy's partial retraction, Mark P. Hatch, whose father and grandfather had been associated with Joshua Fuller in the church's founding, led a charge against her re-admission. Twenty other members, including several women, signed a petition in opposition. To which Nancy replied that she had "no

wish to disturb the harmony of the church, or cause contention among its members, therefore, under existing circumstances, I withdraw, and shall not think of a reunion with the church." She died five years later, still an outcast.

Three years after that, one of her sons, Thomas S. Fuller, donated a plot of land to the Trinitarian church, "in consideration of the good will I have toward the Trinitarian Congregational Society."

Just what the issue was between her and her husband, who the man was with whom she was accused of having "an improper intimacy," why Mark P. Hatch still opposed her return after so many years, where she was buried after her death, or what her relationship was with her son, must all remain mysteries. As detectives, combining Castine's vital records with the census, and comparing them with the records of the Trinitarian church, we know there are mysteries yet to be solved.

#

The Baron continued from page 1

version Ouabi is killed, thus avoiding the awkwardness of the Huron warrior "giving" his wife to the Baron.

A version of the Saint-Castin/Azakia tale made its way to the stage in 1791 as an opera by Hans Gram. The Library of Congress notes that the "Death Song of Ouabi" from that opera was the first musical score published in the United States. In 1795 James Bacon, an English lawyer and sometime playwright, wrote a sentimental tragedy called *The American Indian* that was clearly inspired by Morton's poem. Unable to get his play produced, Bacon published it in London, and included a preface full of inaccurate anthropological commentary on Indian life. Bacon appears to have been aware that Saint-Castin was an actual person, but the playwright labors under the impression that the fictions based on Saint-Castin's exploits are accurate accounts of the man. The literary Saint-Castin turns up in France again in 1798, this time in a prose narrative called *Azakia, Histoire Canadienne*, wherein our hero is referred to as "le baron de Castainville", and in England in an 1817 poem by Thomas Rodd called "The Ballad of Castanio and Azakia." In this poem, however, the author doesn't even mention Saint-Castin by name, instead calling the European a name that appears to combine "Castin" with the "Celario" of the early tales.

continued on next page

By the middle of the nineteenth century, French and English writers lost interest in the Baron, and literary works about Saint-Castin are almost exclusively produced by Americans and set in Penobscot Bay. John Greenleaf Whittier's 1836 poem "Mogg Megone" portrays Saint-Castin not as a romantic hero, but as an older man with a "worn brow and thin grey hair," a venerated figure among the Indians of the Maine coast. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, in "Tales of a Wayside Inn" (1863), also develops the character of the aged Baron. "Baron Castine of St. Castine" may have been "[s]wift as the wind is, and as wild" as a young man in Maine, but the poem focuses on his return to France after an eventful career in Acadia, beautiful Indian princess by his side.



The Baron as depicted in the figurehead of the brig *Baron de Castine* built in Castine 1852
Courtesy of Mariners Museum, Newport News, Va.

The American novelist Mary Hartwell Catherwood produced another romantic portrait of the Baron in her 1894 short story "The Chase of Saint-Castin." This tale has Saint-Castin acting as a "White Sagamore" to the "Abenaki," carving a settlement out of the Maine woods when he encounters the daughter of Madockawando; she is "a superior spirit." The Indian princess is initially reluctant to reveal her love for Saint-Castin, but when the English arrive and make a failed attempt to capture the Baron, her feelings are revealed. The tale ends with the lightly wounded Saint-Castin in the arms of his beloved.

Louise Wheeler Bartlett's *The Baron's Letter: A Romance of Pentagöet* (1915) purports to be a letter written by the Baron himself. Bartlett's literary device seems plain enough when one reads *The Baron's Letter* in the tradition of Dixmerie, Morton and

Longfellow, but in 1934 the historian Roscoe B. Miller read Bartlett's story and mistook it for an authentic "translation of the original biography of the young Baron." This mixing of fiction and history means that a number of twentieth-century histories of the Penobscot region are to be viewed with caution – Bartlett's fictions, like Lahontan's exaggerations, have seeped into "factual" accounts.



The Baron as portrayed by Charles E. Banks 1890
Courtesy of the Maine Historical Society

As the French literature scholar Joe Johnson points out in a recent article on the literary works based on Saint-Castin, such tales of the New World often serve as a means to "reexamine the status quo of social institutions and mores." Most of the literary accounts of the Saint-Castin tale share some features – the nobility of the Native American chief (Abenaki or Huron), the resourcefulness of Saint-Castin (aka Celario or Castanio), and the romantic attractions of the "Indian princess." For many writers, the Baron served the same role we see in characters like Jonathan Swift's Gulliver or Voltaire's Candide – the European who goes to an exotic locale and learns new modes of life from the indigenous population. The Baron's actual biography is exciting enough, but that did not prevent writers from embellishing their accounts with fanciful details and thrilling adventures. Creative accounts of the Baron say very little about trade, an activity that demanded a great deal of the real Baron's energies. The Baron's love life, about which very little is known, is usually the centerpiece of the stories and poems, often in a way that reminds readers of the tales that surround Pocahontas and John Smith. Fascinating, too, is the way the Baron's story traveled around the world, from France to England, across the Atlantic to Boston, back to France, even to Germany. While few today beyond Castine have heard of Saint-Castin, there was a time when he was something like a minor international celebrity.

#

Castine School Ma'ams

Noah Brooks

Editors' Note: This is the first of two essays written by Noah Brooks in 1885 and published in the Castine Gazette, which was edited by the two daughters of Dr. George Wheeler. To our knowledge, they have not appeared elsewhere. The second essay will be in the next edition of the Visitor.

It has occurred to me that some reminiscences of the school-ma'ams of Castine – I mean those of an earlier period than the present – might be interesting to the readers of the *Gazette*. And if in the employment of an old fellow's privilege of garrulousness, I use the pronoun of the first person and singular number more than appears seemly, my excuse must be that I am only going to write about the school-ma'ams that I have known. Of the terrors of some of the pre-historic school-ma'ams, when girls were thrashed on their bare legs with willow withes, or were suspended by their thumbs, or compelled to look steadfastly at the sun, and boys were flogged with a manila rope's-end steeped in brine and caged in a dungeon under the school-house, I shall not venture to speak. The seeming privations and penalties of my own day were sufficient unto that time. The traditions of an earlier and more terrible era make my own griefs comparatively light to bear now.

At the mature age of six years, I first went to a mistress school. It was taught by my cousin, Miss Emmeline Perkins, who subsequently became Mrs. Glover Thomas. The school-house was situated on Green Street, or at the head of Howe's Lane, just below the estate of Mr. Doty Little. The building was a long, low, one-story affair, with the entrance at the eastern end. Of Miss Emmeline's teaching I have a very dim remembrance. I had already been taught my A B C at the knee of my mother, and I have a suspicion that I was sent to school for the purpose of keeping me out of the way. As the institution was a private one, a tuition-fee – ninepence a week – was required for my being taken care of six hours each day, an expense which my parents probably thought small when compared with the amount of trouble saved. Miss Emmeline, I remember, had an odd fashion of securing a temporary lull in the racket of the school-room by crying "keep still, boys, and hear my watch strike the hour." As her watch never did strike the hour, we all learned in time to regard her invitation as a sort of pious fraud.

It was at this school that what seemed a frightful tragedy occurred. We always "staid at noon" in the winter weather, carrying a luncheon and remaining indoors during the intermission, as we were all small boys. While the school-ma'am was gone home, the din and confusion were great. Around the room hung a series of thick paper cards, about twelve inches wide and sixteen inches long, with texts of scripture and easy lessons in Natural History printed thereon. In an unusually tumultuous melee, one noon, my brother John sent one of these ornamental object-lessons scaling through the air. After an erratic flight, it fell edgewise on the head of Rowland Bridgham and laid open a gash in his scalp. Rowland howled with rage and fright, and the blood flowed freely, to the terror of us smaller infants, who supposed that a murder had been committed. In the midst of the row, Miss Emmeline entered and added her hysterical screams to the noise, without stopping to see how serious the matter was. It was a slight affair and speedily forgotten, I doubt not, by Master Rowland; but it made a lasting impression on my youthful mind. I remember that I fled home with the doleful intelligence that John had killed "Rowl" Bridgham.

My next venture in the field of learning was when I was one year older, say about 1837, when I went to school to Miss Eleanor Cobb, who had a private class in the old Cobb mansion, now the Acadian Hotel. The school-room is now used as an office for the hotel, and it was the left-hand room as we entered from the door on Perkins Street. Among my school-mates were Hezekiah Williams, Colin Mead and Lemuel Atherton. Of the latter, I remember, that he was, for some boyish reason, ashamed of his middle name, which was Weeks, and that he asked Miss Eleanor to keep it a secret, and that one of the boys, Charles L. Stevens, I think, found out the secret, and that we employed it ever after as a means of torture. Miss Eleanor was my first love, she being several heads taller than I, and the companion of my elder sisters. She promised me, however, that she would live in her father's office, a small addition adjoining the school-room, the smallness of which she thought would arrest her growth until I could "catch up" with her. My childhood faith was betrayed and Miss Eleanor subsequently married my cousin, Mr. J. T. Little. That disillusion cost me much sorrow.

To the old school-house on the common, in which Miss Isabella Vose taught a town school, was I next sent. The building was low and long, the western end, next to Mrs. Whitney's house, being occupied as a Master's school, and the other, by Miss Vose, whose father was custodian of the county jail, then standing in what is now the flower-garden of the Rev. Mr. Ives. The two doors of the school-house were in the middle of the building, very close together. In the Master's end was a bell, the rope of which hung invitingly down in the wood-room, and was occasionally twitched by juvenile and daring delinquents. The seats – how well I remember them! They were carved with many an initial of preceding generations of boys, ink-stained and browned by time. They were arranged on gradually rising levels, like the seats of a forum, the upper tier being almost on a level with the windows which were a long distance above the ground. The boys and girls were separated by an open space of flooring between. In that school-room we were taught by Miss Vose, and in course of time by her sisters Sally, Lucy and Nancy. It seems to me that there were other school-ma'ams during the long period of my sufferings in that temple of learning. But I have only a dim dream of innumerable "lickings" most of which were undoubtedly deserved and the instruments of which were willow switches cut by the expectant victim, himself, in Upham's tanyard, behind the school-house.

At the age of twelve, I was sent to the school then kept by Miss Mehitable Rogers in the edifice now used as an engine house, on Pleasant Street, next to the house of Captain Rufus Parker. For some unexplained reason, there was an instant and rooted antipathy between myself and Miss Mehitable. With great mortification now, I recall the fact that I omitted no opportunity to treat her with contumely and derision and to "cut up" generally. She was then engaged to be married to Robert Macfarlane, and I thought it a very handsome and manly thing to write his name on every available space about the school-house. Finally, after having a hand-to-hand encounter with my teacher, in which I decidedly got the worst of it, I was sent, at her request, to a master's school on the common, then taught by Mr. Pingree, a very terrible man. Retiring from the field, at the close of a

forenoon session, with my books under my arm, I fired a parting shot at Miss Mehitable, shouting as she went down the street, "goodbye Bob." Poor Macfarlane! He was murdered by savages on the coast of Africa, and it was rumored, was devoured by cannibals.

My stay with Master Pingree was short. He was a terror. My only remembrance of him is that he was constantly walloping somebody. My brother John and myself occupied the same form, and it has always seemed to me that either he or I was whipped every minute in the day. My mental sufferings, as I now recall them, were quite as great when my brother was castigated as when I felt the cowhide on my own back. Master Pingree invented many unique punishments, one of which was to place a boy standing on a tall stool and compel him to hold a log of wood, or to extend at the full length of the arm, without a droop from the horizontal, a heavy book. Once, my poor brother dropped the book, in sheer fatigue, and I can hear now ringing in my ears his yell of "Oh! Oh!" as the master's supple cowhide curled around him in smarting blows. When Master Pingree wore a dark cloud on his brow and threw his coat-collar back on his shoulders, we boys used to tremble in our boots.

But this is a digression in the history of the school-ma'ams. Miss Almira Hawes and Miss Sarah Hawes came next in my experience with the town-schools. I attended their ministrations, I think, with more profit to myself than I had secured at any other term of school. They were severe in their government, otherwise I suppose I should not have been transferred from a Master's school to their's. The Misses Hawes, as I now remember, taught alternately and sometimes together. They occupied the Pleasant Street school-house at first but subsequently taught in the Eastern end of the school-house on the common. When that building was remodelled, in 1843-4, the mistress school was removed to Pleasant Street, with Miss Sarah Hawes as the teacher; and with that transfer closes my personal knowledge of the school-ma'ams of Castine. In another paper I shall try to recall some of the memories of the Castine school-masters under whose rod I have drank at the fount of knowledge.

August 20, 1885

The Fort

A Novel of the Revolutionary War

by Bernard Cornwell
HarperCollins, 2010, pp. 468

reviewed by Paul Gray

Historical fiction is a very old genre. Think *The Iliad*. You could make the case that before we had histories, we had historical fiction, and the former emerged out of the latter instead of the other way around, which is how it works today. If histories give us a sense of what happened and why, the historical novel tries to give the reader a sense of what it felt like to live through it.

We have had the ongoing history of the Penobscot Expedition with all its corrections and disputes for some time. Now Bernard Cornwell has given us the whole thing from its start with the arrival of the British to its fiery finish in Bucksport Harbor, in the form of fiction designed to let the reader feel what it was like to be there. If anybody is up to the task it is Cornwell, author of over fifty novels, many of them bestsellers, including his earlier book, *Agincourt*. He has been described as “the reigning king of historical fiction.”

Most *Visitor* readers probably know the rough outline of the story of the expedition. For them, much of the appeal of *The Fort* will be watching Cornwell ply his craft. As fodder for fiction, the Penobscot Expedition poses some serious challenges. First and foremost is the shape of its action. In *Agincourt* the story builds to a grand climax with one of England’s most famous battles. But in the case of the Penobscot Expedition, almost all the action is frontloaded in the first two days with the storming of Winona Cliff by the marines and soon after, the attack on Fort George (see 1780 drawing of the fort on back page). After that, it’s pretty much waiting around until the British fleet shows up two weeks later. Not what you’d call a good narrative arc.

One way Cornwell gets around this problem is to end the novel not with the Americans fleeing the peninsula, but to tell the story of their desperate retreat up the Penobscot. In some of the best writing in the book, he describes the burning of the slower ships, the navigational blunder of going up the wrong side of Verona Island, Paul Revere’s traitorous

ignoring of orders to rescue soldiers from a grounded vessel, and Saltonstall’s refusal to take out three British frigates when they can’t maneuver up the Penobscot Narrows preferring instead to torch his ship, *Warren*, the pride of the fleet, in Bucksport Harbor lest it fall into British hands.

His second strategy is to focus more on the characters than the action – a justifiable decision in this case, since a different set of characters would have produced a very different outcome. Thanks to omniscience (fiction’s ace of trump over history) we are privy to British General McLean’s desperate thoughts the night after the first attack with the walls of his fort hardly begun. Believing the estimates of his spies, he thinks he is facing a force of 2,000 and knows he cannot withstand another attack. When it doesn’t come, he begins to take the measure of Lovell, the gentleman farmer general of the Rebel army, and to plot small skirmishes to keep him nervous. Omniscience also takes us into the mind of Brigadier General Peleg Wadsworth, who knows from the start exactly how the Rebels can win, but is powerless to get Lovell to move. Cornwell adds to a very entertaining cast the antics of the cowardly spoiled brat, Paul Revere. John Moore, the future British hero of the Napoleonic Wars makes a bad judgment call at Dyce Head, his first battle, and that gnaws at him until McLean gives him a chance to redeem himself. And lastly, the Rebel soldiers who, having been recruited at the point of a gun and given virtually no training, decide that the best military strategy for them is to run away.

Visitor readers familiar with Castine and its waters will get a kick out of bringing that knowledge to events being described. When the marines in the bay decide to attack Cross (Nautilus) Island from the back side by sailing around its western tip, you just know they are going to get hung up on that ledge – a tradition that continues to the present day. When the Rebels attack the Half-Moon Battery, you don’t picture them running down a hill, you see them pounding across David Hatch’s lawn and down Tarratine Street.

In *Agincourt* you feel what it was like to be there. It was bloody hell. In *The Fort*, with the British, you feel despair turn to rising hope; with the Americans just the opposite.

History buffs will enjoy the endnotes where Cornwell discusses the changes he made in the historical record and his reasons for doing so.

Curator's Corner

Paige Lilly

The 2011 Exhibit Committee is hard at work developing this year's summer exhibit, *History and Hearsay: Tales of Castine Homes*. The concept grew out of a desire for a happier topic than last year's exhibit and a means of directly engaging Castine residents. It promises to bring to light interesting, entertaining stories and anecdotes about a wide variety of houses all over town.

The theme raises a number of concerns. History is based on facts found in primary sources – the letters, diaries, maps, photos, accounts or stories written at the time of an event. Hearsay is based on legend or oral history. In some cases we'll have facts, but in other cases we'll just have legend. Is it necessary that each story be proved as part of the exhibit? What if there is no "hard" evidence to back up the legend? Is a legend, by itself, sufficient basis for an exhibit?

Primary sources don't exist for everything, so history ends up being an interpretation of only the sources that survive. Archivists collect and preserve oral history, but it makes us a bit nervous. We value it as an individual's own memories of an event and then we look for another source to corroborate the memory, especially if we plan to present the information as fact. A few of the stories collected by the Exhibit Committee originate in something more like tradition or legend – not personal memories but hearsay from an earlier generation. The results are more like storytelling than history.

Maybe the Curator should just lighten up. It's taken me several weeks to realize that the exhibit could be a great opportunity to explore these concerns.

After all, isn't this just the sort of thing historical societies do – get people together to tell each other stories? Even though the process will be professionally challenging for me, we'll still be having fun.

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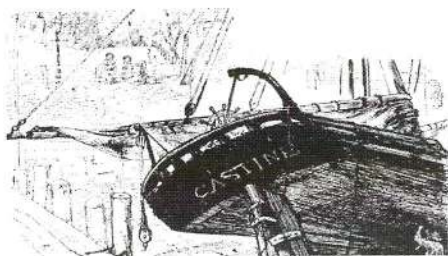
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View of Fort George in 1780. Drawing by Lieut. G. W. D. Jones of the British Army.

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